

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



1
The Information Service
March 15, 1946

1.90
A2 F21 #1

(Information background material for use by State FWA Directors and AA
committees serving as local food managers under the FAMINE EMERGENCY
COMMITTEE)

Cop. 3

Contents

1. Introduction
2. European Famine Facts
3. Human Interest Notes
4. Wheat Roundup
5. What We Can Do

Introduction

"PROVE YOUR FAITH" ... SHARE TO SAVE

America's obligation to do everything possible to reduce the terrible suffering caused by acute food shortages in all parts of the world is seen by President Harry S. Truman as a moral responsibility of the highest order resting squarely on the shoulders of each of us. Here is what he told the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America at Columbus, Ohio, on Wednesday, March 6:

"Now that victory has come, that (production of weapons for war) has stopped. But throughout the world there are now millions and millions of men, women and children who still look to the rich and powerful nations of the world for help. Principally they look to the people of the United States for help. They look to you for help. Not help to fight an enemy, nor help for luxuries and extravagances ... but

just help to keep themselves alive, help in the form of food and clothing, the basic necessities of life. Of course we cannot feed them all. But we can go a long way toward doing it if you want to cooperate and do it.

"As your President, I appeal to you again -- and to all Americans everywhere -- to prove your faith and your belief in the teachings of God by doing your share to save the starving millions in Europe and Asia and Africa. Share your food by eating less, and preventing millions from dying of starvation. Reduce your abundance so that others may have a crust of bread. In short, prove yourself worthy of the liberty and dignity which you have preserved on this earth, by helping the less unfortunate who have been starved by the dictatorship for so many long years and who still serve even in liberation."

(Source: E. I. Times, March 7, 1946)

European Famine Facts

EFFECT OF HUNGER

Effects of hunger on the human body are graphically illustrated in findings of a British project of feeding hungry Dutch children, reported by Eleanor Roosevelt.

The children needed shoes two sizes larger than would be normal for the size of their clothes. Their shoes also wore out twice as fast as shoes worn by normal children. X-ray pictures revealed that the children's feet were without bones. Their feet, therefore, spread and dragged as they walked. This in turn made them shuffle along and wear out their shoes.

Extra calories and better food largely remedied the bone deficiency.

(Source: By Day, 3-11-46)

© 1946 by the American Museum of Natural History

EFFECTS OF MALNUTRITION

Malnutrition is showing itself in many forms in Europe. People seem to have lost their reflexes. Not long ago an American was inspecting a factory on the Rhine. As he was driving slowly through the grounds a workmen walked right into the side of his car, backed away and angled off in another direction as if he had registered nothing. Doctors explained this sleepwalking behavior, common all over Europe, as stemming partly from vitamin deficiencies.

(Source: Collier's Report from Berlin in March 23 issue)

DISEASE RUNNING WILD AMONG EUROPE'S HUNGRY

The health of many Europeans is so bad, due to the food shortage, that millions are threatened with death.

Malaria has gotten out of control in Greece, and is widespread in Holland.

Typhus outbreaks of serious proportions have occurred in Yugoslavia.

One out of every 350 persons in the cities of Poland are dying from tuberculosis.

In Warsaw, one-fifth of the population have tuberculosis.

French children are distinctly below prewar standards of height and weight.

One baby out of every 10 born in Amsterdam Holland...two out of every ten in Southern France.

(Source: Dr. Louis I. Dublin in March "American" magazine)

Europe. Many Americans are now on the spot to have better reports from various countries.

Food ration cuts are announced and theentine areas reported daily. Practically every country in the world has filed a plan for food with the Combined Food Board.

American diet experts say 2,000 calories a person a day are enough to maintain health. In the British-occupied zone of Germany, the nation is down to 1,000 calories. Austria has cut her bread ration by one-third and that from mandatory postwar ration to three-fourths. 95 per cent of the German people suffer from malnutrition. It is estimated 7 million will die of starvation in India this spring.

In the wake of famine, stalks its inevitable companion, disease. Typhus, typhoid, and other diseases almost forgotten in many parts of the world are beginning to reappear in Europe. Children are the greatest sufferers. Only a relatively mild winter has saved thousands from illness and death.

In Egypt, mental and physical disorders have increased four-fold. Some 150,000 French mothers of children are being treated in homes for their bedridden condition.

The infant mortality rate in Italy has almost doubled since 1940, and it has contributed to the country's worse health problems.

In Greece, one out of every eight children is dying. Greece suffers a steady decline in the birthrate and rise in infant mortality. The country is also endemic of typhus.

(Source: New York Times, 3-18-47; Richter and Simpkins, 1947)

CHILDREN, PATIENTS OF WAR VOL 21

All wars are fought against children. The full story of their suffering in World War II will never be told. But basic starvation already started with a gradual reduction of food rations. Then bacon, lard and soap became scarce -- particularly vicious on children.

What then? Undernourishment and lack of cleanliness rated the key for scabies, typhus, and tuberculosis. Because of their lack of physical resistance, thousands of children are dying in Europe this year. In Paris, tuberculosis among children increased 48 percent in some districts, and in southern France, as much as 74 percent.

Americans can't save all the European children already in the last stages of disease. But they can rebuild the weakened bodies of those still fighting for life, and build up resistance to disease in others, by providing them with nutritious food -- wheat, and fats and oils.

Food can be saved by following the recommendations of the Food Emergency Committee. We wouldn't let a neighbor starve, and Europeans are our Eastern neighbors.

(Source: 2 paragraphs - Collier's weekly)

100-100-100-100-100-100-100-100-100-100

UNRRA officials, checking on the food supply situation in a small and isolated Yugoslav town were met by the elders who at first seemed to indicate by their silence and resignation that all was well. Finally, one of the bearded oldsters, stolidly said: "We aren't so bad off here -- y, our children eat every other day."

(Source: UNRRA files)

That seems to have recurred all over Europe today. Children
wait for bread, and small orphans wander the streets as professional
beggars. They even steal for bread.

Advertisers can help put bread into the hands of some of these children. They can decrease their daily consumption. They can think of how satisfied our open children will be when they reach for the second slice of bread.

If every man, woman and child in the United States reduced the use of bread by three slices a day in the home, almost three-fourths of a million tons of wheat would be freed for shipment overseas in the next 31 days.

If you do a little, you can help a lot.

(George W. Ball et al's attorney, USA, 52746)

"One little girl carried in what we thought was a baby about seventeen months old. His little arms and legs had not developed and he was tiny in size. You can imagine how eerie it was to have this baby turn around and talk to us like an old man. He was over five years of age and he couldn't walk."

Source: UIRBA

JAP KIDS FIGHT FOR WOMEN'S DIGNITY

An incident of hungry Japanese children fighting for money bread told by a Navy veteran, may help give a fuller appreciation of how Japanese people act -- how they must feel.

Over months, their rations were cut down to less and less.

"Inches" of bread were spread overboard, or brought ashore to give it to the hungry children in Nagoya. Some who failed to bring sacks with bread, took it ashore.

The 300 kids gathered up bread when they found out we had bread. They raced and pulled and fought to get hold of a loaf. When one claimed you a loaf, others would grab for it. A fight would begin. The kid would try to get a handful of bread. Then he'd run away from the combat, fall to the ground, come back... and start fighting for more.

"Bread was rolled in the dirt... kicked around... and fought over. The bread was eaten."

An Army veteran tells of Filipinos after liberation, returning from their hill hideouts so hungry that they ate paper and all when American G.I.'s offered them "X" rations.

Other veterans tell of hungry Italians swimming in Naples Harbor gathering and eating floating garbage -- lettuce leaves, apple peeling, etc. -- dumped over the side of naval vessels.

(Any veterans of duty in occupied countries can relate instances when they saw hungry people fighting desperately for a parcel of food. Such veterans might be called on to tell their experiences to help others visualize the suffering of hungry humans.)

UNNOURISHED CHILDREN

Hungarian children are undernourished, but you'd look at them and think with considerable alarm (there are enough such cases to speak of), and then not understand. The special lack, poverty and affliction, virtually every child confined, gives them skin a clear, transparent quality which passes for beauty until you realize that nothing is wrong. Or until their faces and hands break out into blotches of raw, swollen skin.

Many have goiter. Others have peculiar skin growths. One boy brought into a hospital outside Prague, was a year old and weighed 12 pounds.

In Albania, the total number of undernourished children is about 70,000. In Czechoslovakia, children up to three years are entitled to two-thirds of a pint of milk, if they can get it. A can of condensed milk costs ten dollars, and is frequently spoiled.

Greece has more than 30,000 homeless and sick orphans. In the Netherlands, there are 4,000 who have not yet been identified. In Italy, orphans and destitute children gather in roving gangs and live from theft.

In Yugoslavia, thousands of children do not know who their parents were or where they came from. They were too small when their parents were killed, and were just picked up by passers-by. Their food consists of plants, roots, leaves, kernels, and water. They look like skeletons, are covered with lice and suffer from every imaginable disease.

Only America can help these unfortunate. If food is provided for them, other families and institutions will take them in. But they look to America for food.

MARCH 1946

We are still running below in our shipments of wheat abroad -- a considerable thousands of farmers, and of their small children, are still starving because of it.

Let's never lose heart, however, that we will soon begin to meet our goal of one million tons per month. To date, practically all the elevators are open; a short time ago most of them were plugged. The freight car situation has also considerably, and increasing numbers of cars are rolling to shipping ports.

There is one enormous and country-wide bottleneck left; or, rather a series of little bottlenecks. Wheat just isn't moving off the farm fast enough. Rest it in storage on thousands of farms -- lying idle and useless. There is still the false impression that all the elevators in the country are closed, and because this is why farmers aren't turning loose their wheat.

Remember: First six months of the current fiscal year we exported about five million tons of wheat and flour. Our goal for the January-June period is six million tons. This is enough wheat to furnish on-half of a loaf every day to about one and one-half million people for a period of six months.

Our relief needs abroad are so great that we cannot afford to fail in the achievement of the export goal. Foreign requirements during the January-June 1946 period are conservatively estimated at over 20 million tons. Export supplies in the United States, Canada, Australia and Argentina, on the other hand, total between 10 and 12 million tons. Full achievement of the export goals, therefore, will still leave a deficit of at least eight million tons. This means a bare subsistence diet of 1100 to 1500 calories a day for large groups throughout Europe and Asia.

In other words, there will be precious little to eat in the war-scarred countries, even if we meet our goals. If we don't meet them, there

the need for the food in that all parts of the world have
more than we know it, and our fellow citizens do not fail in their awareness
of the desperate situation once the facts on human suffering are
made clear. The almost certainly inevitable reaction will be a demand on
individuals, do to help? Here's the answer:

1. fellow humans of the starving we can --

1. Cut our bread consumption. Estimates are that one slice out of
every loaf of bread baked every day goes into the garbage. Use bread
make up for it with potatoes

2. Eat cereals instead of bread -- one dish of oatmeal equals three
slices of bread in food value.

3. Cut out deserts made of wheat -- if we must have desserts make
others are starving, use fruits. No pastries or cakes.

(Remember, if all of us would cut our daily home bread consumption to
three slices a day, about three-fourths of a million tons of wheat could be
ready for shipment overseas in the next 90 days.)

4. Save fats and oils by making better use of meat drippings for frit-
ting, serve fewer fried foods, save and re-use fats and oils. Give bacon grease
for cooking, salvage all fats that cannot be re-used and turn them in to your
butcher or grocer. Eliminate oils and salad dressings.

5. Help the farmers by planting Victory gardens again and canning
food at home.

(another punch line -- a teaspoon of fat saved each day for each
person in the U. S. will mean a total saving of at least 1 million pounds of
fat a day.)

1. The following methods of saving food should be used in the preparation of food: (1) use smaller amounts of meat, fish, etc., in dishes rather than large amounts; (2) use the customer's own bread, cake and cookies instead of the restaurant's; (3) use potatoes instead of meat and rice side dishes; (4) use the slices of rolls and sandwiches of bread in the baking; (5) use fresh vegetables in place of plastic, plus and dates; (6) reduce the number of courses, e.g., 1½ soups, etc.; (7) absolutely give up three layer cakes; (8) urge the customer to order only what he is sure he can eat; (9) substitute or add dressings for oil dressings on salads; (10) use wheat cereal in salads where possible; (11) re-use food fats and salvage grease; (12) save use of bread now wasted; (13) boil or broil rather than fry where possible.

2. The baker can:

(1) reduce the weight of their products by at least 10 percent; (2) use smaller and smaller loaves; (3) slice bread thinner to get more slices per loaf; (4) save flour, fats and oil by avoiding spoilage and waste.

3. Food distributors and manufacturers can:

(1) encourage the use of currently more plentiful foods in the consumer diet, e.g., vegetables, fish, fruits, etc.; (2) Give consumers recipes for low or plentiful foods; (3) conserve foods by cutting waste in food distribution channels; (4) encourage consumers to conserve and re-use foods and oil.